

**AUSTIN – TRAVIS COUNTY EMS ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

WEDNESDAY, February 1, 2017



The Austin – Travis County EMS Advisory Board convened on February 1, 2017, 15 Waller Street, in Austin, Texas at 9:30 a.m.

Board Members in Attendance: Chris Ziebell, Vard Curtis, Lisa Harris, Justin Otwell, John Villanacci, Tracy Dalbosco, Jerry Staton

Board Members Absent: Mark Clayton, Randall Higgins

Other Attendees: Paula Barr, Michael Benavides, Jeff Hayes, Josh Davies, Casey Ping, Terry Browder, Aaron Woolverton, Robert Abbott, Teresa Gardner, James Hawley, Mark Escott

1. CALL TO ORDER – February 1, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Dr. Ziebell.

2. QUORUM DETERMINATION

A quorum was met and the meeting proceeded.

3. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Motion: The minutes for the regular meeting of August 29, 2016 were approved on a motion by Board Member Villanacci and seconded by Board Member Otwell on a 7-0 vote.

4. RECEIVE CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS/COMMENT – None

5. RECOGNITION OF SERVICE OF FORMER BOARD MEMBER: PAULA BARR

Board Members, ATCEMS Staff and others in attendance recognized the contributions Paula Barr has given for nine years as a Board Member, many of them spent as the Vice-Chair. Her commitment to the citizens of Travis County and Austin through her service and dedication on this Advisory Board will be missed.

6. INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBER: JERRY STATON

Mr. Staton was welcomed to the team. He shared information about his work as a first responder.

7. REVIEW SYSTEM HIGHLIGHT REPORTS

See Item 9b.

8. OFFICER ELECTIONS

Motion: Board Member Villanacci motioned for Chair Clayton to continue in his role as Chair and nominated Board Member Dr. Chris Ziebell as Vice-Chair; seconded by Board Member Justin Otwell; approved on an 7-0 vote.

9. RECEIVE UPDATES FROM SYSTEM AGENCIES REPRESENTATIVES:

- a) **Medical Director's Report: Mark Escott, Medical Director, Office of the Medical Director (OMD)**
- Dr. Escott discussed medical direction for the ESDs. Vice Chair Dr. Ziebell as well as other Board Members have concerns as to why the ESDs are leaving the system to find different medical direction. Dr. Escott explained there are approximately two-thousand first responders practicing under his medical license and there needs to be a better ratio of Medical Director per first responder in order to have more over site; this can be done by hiring more Medical Directors. Dr. Escott and Dr. Ziebell have discussed creating an EMS Fellowship Program which would help, but OMD would still need to hire more physicians to provide the amount of oversight for this large of a system. The system has approximately one-hundred thousand patients per year.
 - Mr. Davies, Travis County Executive Manager, has had discussions with ESDs about the ratio in the county. The system needs to broaden because currently it is not a system approach. While he supports Dr. Escott's work, the system needs to be looked at since some ESDs are not satisfied with the current status.
 - ESD1 North Lake Travis has taken an alternative approach since they have an agreement with ATCEMS, but not with the OMD for medical direction.
 - Vice Chair Dr. Ziebell concerns are about ESDs breaking off on their own without communicating to the medical community their plans in advance and it should be done so that everyone is on the same page. There should be a smooth transaction when a patient exchanges hands between an ESD and ATCEMS. Vice Chair Ziebell suggested a forum where they can discuss best quality patient care and consistency in practice. Dr. Escott agreed that it presents challenges and although ESDs will continue to break away from the OMD, he will continue to encourage them to stay under his direction.
- b) **Austin EMS Department: Ernesto Rodriguez, Chief**
- Since Chiefs Rodriguez and Brown were at a special Department Review presentation with City Council, Assistant Chief Teresa Gardner provided the updates, including a similar Department Review that was being shared with City Council (presentation document attached).
 - Discussed an update on the 1115 DSRIP Waiver and possibility of it continuing. It has helped fund the Community Health Paramedic Program. The waiver program was not meant to be sustainable and was set up to help promote start up programs. Changes in the Affordable Care Act could also affect the department on reimbursements. Board Member Otwell provided information about the legislative session and offered his help if needed.
- c) **Travis County Emergency Services: Josh Davies, Executive Manager**
- Danny Hobby has retired and Josh Davies is the new Executive Manager with Travis County. Mr. Davies is from San Jose, CA and provided a briefing of his background in emergency services.
 - The system needs to be broadened because it is not currently a system approach. Above all, patient care should come first. The matter of ESDs changing medical directors is a complex issue and it is a natural progression of growth. While supportive of Dr. Escott's work, not all ESDs are satisfied with the current status. Mr. Davies focus will be to create a forum with Dr. Escott along with others in the medical field. Vice Chair Dr. Ziebell requested that they have the ESDs participate too since those providing medical care should be connected.
- d) **Austin Fire Department: Tom Dodds, Chief of Staff**
- Assistant Chief Aaron Woolverton provided the update for AFD.
 - AFD is working with the Office of the Medical Director on Performance Improvement.
 - Working with OMD to improve the CPR Program.

e) **Emergency Services Districts: Robert Abbott, CAFCA President**

- Chief Abbott was elected as the new CAFCA President and is filling the role that Chief Ron Moellenberg left.
- Chief Abbott provided an overview of the ESDs and said that some of them are very high performing. Discussions have been ongoing for the past ten years to change medical direction and to leave the ATCEMS system.

10. REVIEW 2017 TIMELINE

- The timeline was reviewed and no changes were made.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

- Board Member Dalbosco asked Dr. Escott if he had an update on the Australian model he presented to the Board last year. Dr. Escott said he is thinking about a hybrid model. It would entail recruiting and retaining talented people. By doing so they can eventually grow and move into positions such as physician assistant, nursing, pharmacy programs, etc.

12. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

The minutes were approved on this the 3rd day of May 2017 on a unanimous vote.